

# Lakeside-News

Nov 2012



*"I tell you the truth,  
whatever you did for one of the least of these  
brothers of mine, you did for me."  
~ Matthew 25:40*

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From the desk of the executive director

## The Least Of These

The man who stood before me smelled like he had not bathed for days. According to the report, Mr Ng was mentally unwell, an outpatient of the Institute of Mental Health. He lived alone in a small flat, which stank of urine and rubbish. He had defaulted on his rent and utilities bills, and was on the verge of being evicted. I was on a home visit to assess his situation and to see how I could connect him to the social services that he needed. He had no known family or friends to depend on. Despite his mental illness, he was able to communicate well with me. After that first meeting, his usual opening line whenever he saw me was, "Gua bo lui. Lu wu boh? Hor gua tam po" (In Hokkien: "I have no money. Do you have some to give me?"). Over the next few weeks, I arranged for Mr Ng to receive regular food rations and financial assistance, and helped him to open a bank account to pay his rent and utilities via Giro. We also managed to find a volunteer who served as a caregiver, visiting him regularly to provide support and care, and to accompany him on his visits to the hospital.

Our mission is to serve people like Mr Ng. I recall buying Mr Ng a meal at the food court. Many people stared at him, because of his dishevelled appearance. **Instead of shunning people like Mr Ng, we need all the more to reach out to those who are marginalised.** These include the incarcerated and their families, the homeless, and the chronic poor that we serve. Through our work with them, we seek to help them cope with the demands of daily living, regain order in their chaotic lives, and overcome their obstacles in order to survive and thrive.

In this issue of eNews, you will read stories of how our beneficiaries have had their lives enriched, not only because of our interventions, but because of the generous contributions of individuals and corporates such as you. **On behalf of Lakeside, thank you for your care and support that has enabled us to reach the last, the least, and the lost, to help them find hope and meaning in a difficult world.**

God bless  
Teo Tee Loon  
Executive Director

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# FiT Shelter's Artouch Photography Workshop

Nine children from the Families-in-Transition (FiT) Shelter participated in the Artouch Photography Workshop held in June 2012. The 3-part workshop was conducted for the children from the FiT Shelter to impart to them the art and basics of photography. At the first session, each child was given a disposable camera for them to take snapshots of some outdoor activities and their daily lives. For the first session, they were brought to the Chinese Garden at Jurong. During the final session, each child then selected their favourite photo and shared with their group the story behind the shot taken, and the reason for choosing that particular shot. The children were affirmed and encouraged by the volunteers as they shared their stories.

Our photography workshop aims to provide an avenue to capture the creative imaginations of our children at the Shelter by equipping them with the knowledge and basic skills of photography. It also hopes to enhance the children's self-esteem and build up their confidence by exploring their previously untapped talents in art.



The FiT Shelter children participants at the Artouch Photography Workshop trying out their new-found skills at the Chinese Garden.

This workshop took place successfully in collaboration with the Photographing Perspective in Society (FPS) conducted by three volunteers who are working closely with the FiT Shelter Staff. The children thoroughly enjoyed the sessions, as the volunteers expressed their passion not only in imparting skills, but also in befriending them.

Rachel Bansan  
Social Worker

## Tan Chin Tuan Foundation iCherish Award 2012

The nine children who attended the Artouch Photography Workshop had the opportunity to participate in the Tan Chin Tuan Foundation iCherish Photo Contest and Exhibition on 21 July. Held in conjunction with the YMCA's Y-Proms Concert at SMU Green, the Tan Chin Tuan photo contest created a unique opportunity for its beneficiaries from 35 organisations to capture significant moments to be cherished. The aim was to encourage inter-generational bonding within the community. The participants snapped spontaneous shots using disposable cameras sponsored by the foundation.

Out of the 4,500 entries submitted, two of our children's entries were among the 19 selected as winning entries. Izwaan and Farhan, whose photo submissions best reflect the theme by capturing meaningful inter-generational interactions, won the 3rd Prize and the Merit Award in Category A (15 years and below) respectively. Farhan also won Popular book vouchers with his creative winning entry in the Photo Caption Contest at the award presentation

ceremony. Their award-winning photographs were exhibited at the YMCA Y-Café until September. Winning the competition and receiving recognition for their talents have given them an immense boost in confidence, besides joy and delight in discovering their latent skills in photography.

Grace Tan,  
Community Partnerships Manager



Izwaan and Farhan receiving their awards from Ms Chew Gek Hiang, Council Member of the Tan Chin Tuan Foundation.



The winners of the competition, together with Ms Chew Gek Hiang (centre, in red), Council Member of the Tan Chin Tuan Foundation and Ms Yap Su-In (extreme left), Deputy CEO of the foundation.



Izwaan's winning entry



Farhan's winning entry



Farhan's winning caption for the left photo: "Three kung fu masters are fighting an invisible monster."

# Shell partners Lakeside Family Centre to help families in need

Shell has “adopted” Lakeside Family Centre in 2012, partnering the centre with the twin objectives of motivating children from disadvantaged backgrounds and for Shell employees to be ambassadors in interacting with and contributing to the community in which Shell operates.

A whole series of activities have been lined up in 2012. In April, employees of the Shell Jurong Island site organised a movie-cum-magic show for 50 children from the Families-in-Progress (FiP) programme while in June, the children from the Families-in-Transition (FiT) Shelter were treated to an exciting bowling lesson-cum-friendly competition.

In August, Shell volunteers taught over 35 primary school children from the Jurong West Before and After School Centre about the importance of fire safety in the home. Each child even had a chance to use a fire extinguisher under an adult’s close supervision and guidance.

Lakeside Family Centre has also been keen to share their expertise with Shell staff. In May, LFC volunteer Wendy Koh gave a parenting talk to Shell staff, sharing strategies for parents to shape their children’s behaviour and reduce stress.

“Shell has always been active in the South West District through programmes that reach out to the community, ” said Mr Chiew Nguang-Yong, General Manager of Shell Jurong Island. **“Our partnership with Lakeside Family Centre has been very successful and we will continue to support the centre through activities that benefit needy and less advantaged families in our community.”**

*Ms Sonia Meyer  
Communications Advisor,  
Shell Companies in Singapore*



Shell staff and children after an evening of bowling.



Shell Jurong Island General Manager Mr Chiew Nguang Yong presenting a cheque for S\$11,010.95 to Mr Lim Geok Huat, Assistant Director of Specialised Services, from the proceeds of a Shell donation drive in December 2011.



Shell volunteer guiding a child on the correct way of using a fire extinguisher.



Shell Jurong Island staff and children from the Jurong West Before and After School Centre.

## Mothers’ Support Group

A promotion of health awareness to the mothers was embarked upon. We organised a health talk in July as well as basic aerobic stretching classes to help the mothers be more aware of the importance of having a balanced diet and an active lifestyle.

In August, we organised a Hari Raya celebration with all the mothers. The mothers brought their children dressed in their beautiful traditional costumes. Besides that, we also had Hari Raya visitations to their homes at Jurong West, Boon Lay and Jurong East. **They had a very enjoyable and joyful festive season.**

One of the mothers imparted her handicraft skills of making fabric flowers to the other mothers. These fabric flowers can be used to make hair, costume and curtain accessories. We also held a farewell party for the English teacher who returned to Indonesia in October. The mothers specially made a Thank You card for the teacher. We appreciate the time and effort the English teacher spent with us and her love for the mothers.

*Alyssa Chong  
Counsellor*



The English teacher (Centre) with the mothers from the support group, proudly holding the lovingly handmade appreciation card.

Children from the Families-in-Progress (FiP) programme were treated to an exciting Zoo Outing Event organised in collaboration with Petra Foods Limited on 1 June. Forty-four children between the ages of 7-12 years old registered for the event. This is Petra Foods Limited's second collaboration with Lakeside Family Centre. In mid-2011, when Lakeside Family Centre first approached Petra Foods Limited for some food donations in the form of gift hampers for the Hari Raya Puasa and Deepavali festive occasions, the management was very generous. They donated nine types of goodies to pack into 250 hampers, which benefited hundreds of needy families.

## Partnership with Petra Foods Limited

For this second collaboration, Petra Foods Limited's generosity in their giving as well their personal warmth have again been immeasurable. The management and staff teams met the beneficiaries at the Lakeside Taman Jurong Centre and travelled together with the children in the same buses to and from the zoo. Throughout the event, staff members took special care of the children and ensured their safety. The teams came up with

mathematical quizzes and games to engage the children and promote cohesiveness through solving the sums together. The children were connected with one another in an art competition too. Everyone enjoyed themselves and at the end of the event, the 44 children were given a \$20 Popular book voucher each.

At the end of the event, the management and staff members gathered back at Lakeside's Taman Jurong Centre, bidding farewell to all the children before they left for home. It has been a most wonderful event for our needy families, and good feedback was received by both organisations. Our children look forward in anticipation of more of such events. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Board and Staff Members of Petra Foods Limited for their generous donation of \$13,453 to Lakeside Family Centre.



Mdm Lim Seok Bee, Chief Operating Officer of Petra Foods Ltd, giving out the book vouchers to the delighted children.



Thank you, Petra Foods!



Staff of Petra Foods Ltd working on the puzzles together as a team with the children.



The children letting their creative juices flow in their art pieces.

Diana Low  
Counsellor

## Far East Organization Brings Children's Day Cheer

Far East Organization, in collaboration with Lakeside Family Centre, embarked on their first Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) project with our agency for the year on 5 October 2012. The event was organised in conjunction with Children's Day. 68 children beneficiaries from our "Families-in-Progress Programme" (FiP) – a programme that serves families with a net per capita income of below \$300 - were invited for a movie treat at the Golden Village Cinema at VivoCity. The children, aged 7 to 12 years old, were excited and delighted to be given the opportunity to watch the movie "Brave". This animated family movie – set in the olden days of Scotland – imparts good values on mother-daughter relationship, as well as relying on one's bravery and talents to make wise decisions in life. The children had the privilege of the whole cinema to themselves, which Far East Organization (FEO) has kindly sponsored.

The day begun with the children gathering at Lakeside's Taman Jurong Centre early in the morning. They were greeted with a hearty breakfast of McDonald's Sausage McMuffin and a packet of Magnolia milk provided by and served to them by the team of dedicated FEO staff volunteers. 4 other volunteers came from our external pool of volunteers. After breakfast and a game of ice-breakers that facilitated the bonding between FEO staff and the children, the children were bussed by two coaches to VivoCity.

Upon their arrival, they excitedly found their seats in the cinema, armed with a Combo set comprising a box of popcorn and a drink. When the movie started, we could hear the sounds of excitement and wonder from the audience of children. At the end of the movie, the children were bussed back to the Centre, where delightful goodie

bags lovingly prepared by FEO staff volunteers for each child await them. The goodie bags came with biscuits, sweets, and a \$5 KFC voucher for each child for their lunch.

Ms Yu We Le, Director of Retail Business Group and liaison person from Far East Organization for this CSR team that is collaborating closely with Lakeside Family Centre, said after the event:

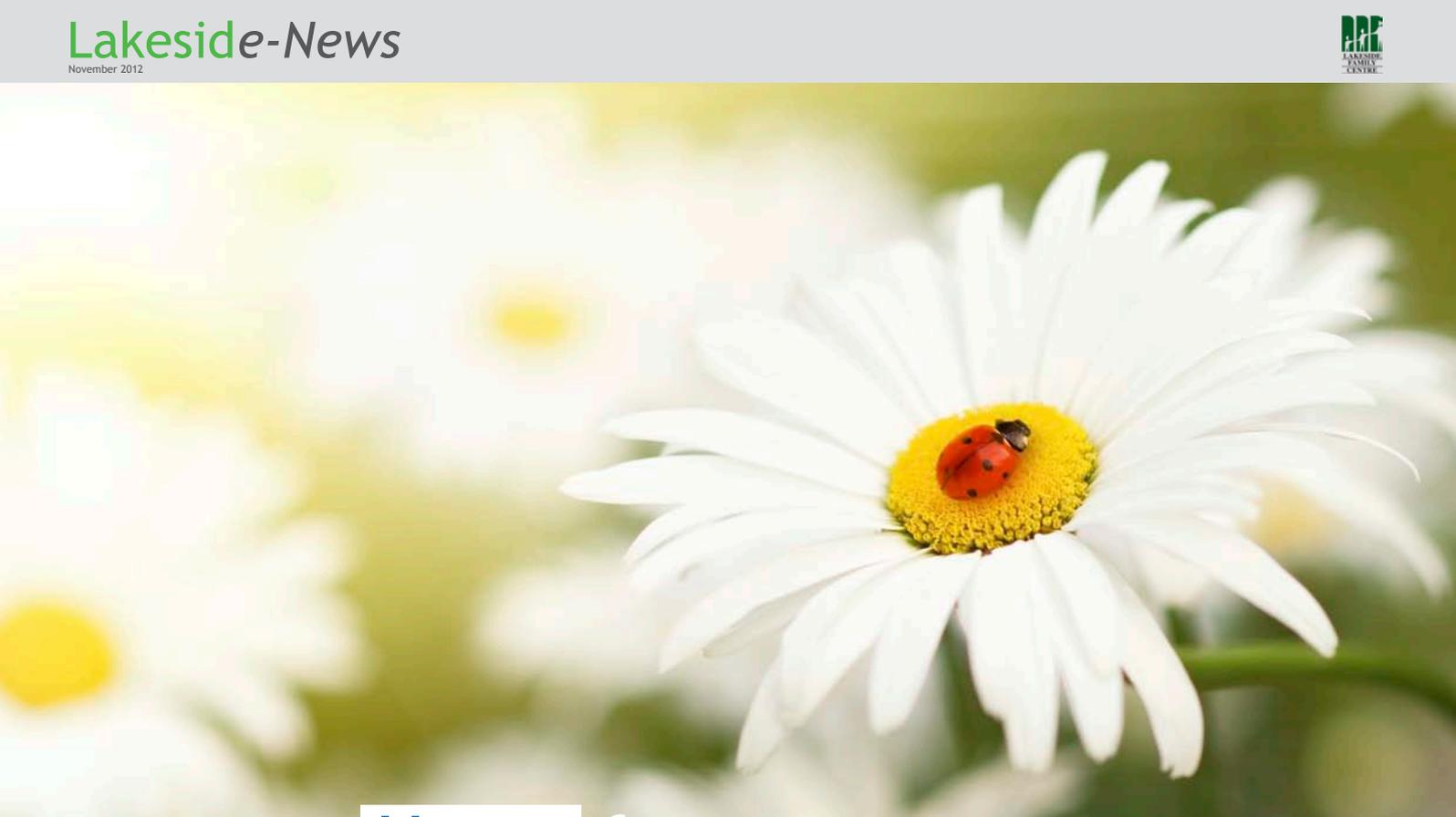
**"I am glad that the children had a great time. Thanks to Lakeside Family Centre's team dedication to the needy children. Special thanks to your volunteers and we are happy to play our part to make this event memorable!"**

Lakeside Family Centre and all our FiP children beneficiaries would like to express our thanks and appreciation to Far East Organization for making this a very memorable Children's Day.

Diana Low  
Counsellor



A memorable Children's Day with Ms Yu We Le (right, in red) of Far East Organization and her staff.



## a Haven for a New Lease of Life

Mr Ahmad (*not his real name*), aged 57, first came to our Centre as our TJ Haven client. TJ Haven serves the incarcerated and their families through in-depth and integrated services to meet their practical, educational and emotional needs, both before and after release. From age 16, Mr Ahmad has been addicted to drugs. For his drug abuse offence, he has been in and out of prison for 26 years. After his latest release from the prison, he failed the routine urine test. Out of desperation to break free from his addiction and to avoid arrest, he fled to Indonesia illegally and got married there. While there, he worked at construction sites. Eventually his health deteriorated, and he decided to come back to his homeland.

Upon his return to Singapore in 2011, he was immediately arrested. By then, he has a wife and 3 children. After serving his 6-month prison sentence, Mr Ahmad resolved to never again return to prison after this release. He attended the Brief Intervention (BI) Programme conducted by Lakeside Family Centre. The BI is a reintegration programme for inmates recently released from prison. Thereafter, he also signed up for the Individual Service Plan (ISP), an in-care counselling.

Mr Ahmad was very proactive and keen to restart his life. He wanted to be gainfully employed and make a change in his life for his wife and children's sake. However, he lacked family support as his parents and siblings had the same negative perceptions about him, due to his past repeated imprisonments. He was also suffering from a slip disc, and needed multiple surgeries and operations.

Despite these challenges, through the counselling sessions, he was gradually empowered and motivated to focus on his work and immediate family. His counsellor also encouraged him to attend courses at the Community Development Council (CDC) in order to upgrade his skills and increase his employability.

To help him get back on his own two feet, we also provided some form of interim assistance to him. His counsellor helped apply for and obtained financial assistance from the Lee Foundation for 12 months to assist him with his monthly expenses.

Lakeside Family Centre, through our Christmas Appeal, was able to give him food vouchers and a love gift for the festive occasion. He also participated in various activities organised by the Centre like the Christmas Programme and Family Camp. After being with us for a few months, Mr Ahmad said that he felt Lakeside Family Centre has become his family.

With the CDC's recommendation, Mr Ahmad signed up for and faithfully attended training courses under the Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) System related to the Security Officer job offered by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA). Upon his completion of the course, he even proactively wrote to the Security Industry Regulatory Department to obtain a Security Officer License, and was successful. He was thrilled, as with his past criminal record, it would have been a challenge to get employed. He was hired by the Carlton Hotel and is now able to support his wife and children. Now he is motivated to even go for a supervisor's course as his boss has found his work good and satisfactory. With so many helping hands, Mr Ahmad has found a new lease of life, and is finally able to break free from his past bondage of addictions.

Vani Isaac  
Counsellor